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EDITORIAL NOTES.

IN the very first sentence of the *Spectator*, Addison, with his usual gentleness and perfect truth of satire, makes the following remark.— "I have observed that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure, unless he knows whether the writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right understanding of an author." Addison's contemporaries listened to him with delight, and took from him many a warning. Would that the mild and genial irony of that last clause of his might lead our own generation to repentance and reform!

For externals mean too much to most of us in our literary studies. We are apt to think that an anecdotal knowledge of our men of letters is a worthy aim and test of study; and to esteem him learned in literature who is learned in literary biography. There is too, a curiously common and curiously futile practice among our students, of culling passages from many critics about the poem, or book, or writer, they have to study; choosing outstanding utterances from those passages; and, without really pondering or comparing them, trying to remember and reproduce them, in examinations, as a unified criticism upon the matter. As if such a "farrago" of ill-gathered and un-coordinated opinions could ever form a definite and consistent criticism, or make intelligible any possible point of view! Externalism in study is equally fatal whether it prizes the foolish details of an author's life and behaviour or collects "gems of criticism" upon his work. For though the main points of biography help our understanding of the man's nature, and therefore of his work, and though the utterances of great critics, if *pondered* and *applied* by our-

selves, must deepen our understanding; yet of incalculably greater importance is the pondering, laborious and incessant, of the actual work with which we deal. In that way only can we come in vital contact with the man whose personality made it; and such contact is, beyond all comparison, the first object of all study of literature. Nor will the superficial reading of all his works bring us so close to him as the faithful contemplation of even a few pages. Great always are the evils of over reading. "Much reading is like much eating," says Dr. South; "wholly useless without digestion." And more famous is the dictum of Hobbes: "If I had read as much as other men, I should have been as ignorant as they."

Unfortunately reality of study and understanding is at a discount. It means a good deal of hardly-acquired self-discipline; and the results are less showy in conversation and examination than those of much more superficial studies. Yet it means also culture and power.

In this connection the meaning that is often given to the word "literary" is a sign of the times. In how many papers and magazines has the column headed "literary gossip" got any connection with literature at all? The contributors may occasionally deviate into a critical remark (usually either over-timid or over-bold), but their primary aims are only too well indicated by the word "gossip." At this moment, for instance, we look over the last few numbers of a certain journal; and here are some of the headings in the "literary gossip" columns:— "Slim attendance at memorial service for Alfred Austin;" "Maxim Gorki haunts cinemas at Capri;" "Original of Sherlock Holmes didn't like fame as sleuth;" "Shaw and Wells make up quarrel of long standing;" "Arnold Bennet's health still indifferent;" "Hall Caine's eldest son may run for Parliament." This is tragic and typical. We do not intend a breath of censure upon the magazine that has printed these things: we value it even to the point of being quite interested in this "gossip." The taste of a great body of the public has been understood and catered for. But it is as sad as it is certain that such matters are the primary interest of an immense number of people who consider themselves in touch with literature when they scan such irrelevancies.

A manifestation of the same spirit is the prevalent ridiculous and impertinent curiosity about the details of the lives of prominent aristocrats and politicians. That spirit provoked the innocuous satire of the following verses of Denis Turner:—

I trust I shall escape rebuke
If I discourse about a Duke.
He buys his hats at Blank and Co.'s,
So I am told by one who knows.
He likes to walk about his park,
He loves the singing of the lark.
He has (it is his Ducal way)
Three satisfying meals a day.
He generally sleeps in bed,
A pillow underneath his head.
Such is his sense of what is meet,
He wears his boots upon his feet;
And sometimes, so I understand,
He wears a glove on either hand—

In many papers you may note
Such anecdotes as these I quote;
The many useful hints they give
Will show us clearly how to live.

The current number of the *International Journal of Ethics* contains a stimulating article by Sir William Collins upon "The place of volition in education." Sir William is a strong believer in the teaching of morality in schools. He holds that even where religious teaching is impossible there is an ample field for direct and definite moral teaching, and efficient moral training; and considers it the merest folly to leave this vital part of education undefined and unscheduled, and at the mercy, both in quantity and in quality, of the whim of the individual teacher. "I should be the last," he quotes himself as having said in the House of Commons, "to deny that religion gives force and colour and sanctity to all moral instruction, but there is a large gap which is not filled up at the present time. With hygiene on the one hand and religion on the other there is an intermediate realm occupied by such instruction as cleanliness of body and mind, orderliness, punctuality in performance of duties, good manners, fortitude, kindness, self-respect and self-sacrifice."

Why has such training of the will been so sadly neglected, and why do people look upon the very idea of it, even now, with suspicion ever ripening into hostility? One great reason, thinks Sir William, is the prevalance, in recent times, of the *atmosphere* of the Benthamite philosophy. The teaching of "that self-complacent and self-assertive school...suggested necessitarianism and hedonism in morals," and thus, under its influence, the training of *volition* was looked upon as an irrelevant and futile thing. The deification of science resulted, and the correlative neglect of such humanising studies as that of literature. Matthew Arnold's generation (and, as Sir William would imply, our own) was much in need of that great critic's warning when he said: "Neither humanists nor realists adequately conceive the circle of knowledge, and each party is unjust to all that to which its own aptitudes do not carry it. The humanists are loath to believe that man has any access to vital knowledge except by knowing himself,–the pœtry, philosophy, history which his spirit has created; the realist that he has any access except by knowledge of the world,–the physical sciences, the phenomena and the laws of nature...The study of letters" (and here is the final justification of literary, historical, philosophic education, and what we have called the "warning" to the devotees of exclusively scientific education) "is the study of the operation of human force, of human freedom and activity; the study of nature is the study of the operation of non-human forces, of human limitation and passivity. The contemplation of human force and activity tends naturally to heighten our own force and activity, the contemplation of human limits and passivity tends rather to check it. Therefore the men who have had the humanistic training have played, and yet play, so prominent a part in human affairs, in spite of their prodigious

ignorance of the universe, because their training has powerfully fomented the human force within them."

Clearly, then, education in the "humanities" is of immense value for the training of the will. But there should be deliberate and special training too. The will of the child is very susceptible to training. A child's impulses and wishes need rather to be guided than contradicted: his will should be trained and developed, not systematically opposed. His natural tendencies are full of guidance for his teacher. Sir William remarks, "Our forefathers used to say, 'Go and see what the children are doing, and tell them they mustn't,' while the latest cult would subordinate the teacher to the child in obedience to the doctrine, 'Enquire what the child demands and let him have it.'" That, of course, is carrying the reaction too far. The child's will is healthy enough, but it demands a process of culture. "Surely procedure according to principles, which the mature mind and experience of mankind have elaborated, can be of infinite service in training the agent of choice, in cultivating fixity of purpose, in raising high ideals; and, by a graded scheme of moral education, help to evolve, not merely a good animal, but a good man. In training the young mind toward self-discipline, not by compelling obedience, but by winning it, lies the secret of true education."

If this can be done, we shall be nearer to solving some of our criminal problems. Sir William, indeed, laughs at "these who are apt to regard delinquency as a disease and, following the pretty conceit developed by Samuel Butler's genius in Erewhon, would reciprocally regard disease as a crime." But he would certainly agree that in many cases crime is the result of a certain weakness or misdirection of the will, and that will-training might well have made the crime impossible. The following words have their suggestiveness even for those of our readers who are not potential criminals.! "I think it was Paget who, when referring to a hystero-epileptic who could not move her limb, said with felicitous epigram, 'She says, "I cannot," it looks like "I will not," it is "I cannot will."' Yes, indeed, it is true of many imbeciles, degenerates, drug addicts, and 'feeble-minded,' whom the legislature finds such difficulty in defining and dealing with, that they are suffering, —if one may use such a collocation of term,—from a disease of the will. They are often profuse in promise, but inept in performance; 'I will if I can' is over on their lips, but the 'can if I will' involves a tension to which they are indisposed or unequal...... It has been well said that no one is truly educated unless he is able to do what he ought to do, when he ought to do it, whether he wants to do it or not; or as a yet older authority puts it, he who is master himself is master of a king, but he who is a slave to himself is the slave of a slave."

Before the new Laureate, Dr. Bridges, was chosen, the "Journal of Education" held a competition, in which its readers were invited to name those whom they considered the three greatest living English poets, in order of excellence. The result of the voting was that Kipling

was first by a long way. He was given nearly twice as many votes as William Watson, who came next. After Watson came Bridges, at a distance of about twenty votes; and far behind him came Alfred Noyes. All the votes were given before it was known who was to be laureate.

Now, this supplies an interesting commentary upon the choice of that laureate. There is something pleasing about the idea, which occurs to one sometimes, that the laureate might be chosen by a plebiscite, a vote of the people. It would, of course, be almost intolerably difficult to work. It is difficult enough to decide who "the people" are for purposes of political suffrage; and it would be much harder to decide what are the necessary qualifications of a voter who is to vote not on a political but on a poetic matter. It would be futile to restrict this constituency to those who have academic qualifications: they are not the only appreciators of poetry, and one doubts whether they are even the best. And the political division into parties is nothing to the poetic division into tastes; nor can tastes be measured against each other by a process of voting. The readers of the *Journal of Education*, however, are, comparatively speaking, a representative body. The large majority of them are, one imagines, teachers; and there are both men and women of all grades of culture among them. It is, therefore, very significant that their choice of Kipling should be so very decisive. One has little doubt, too, that any wide and representative plebiscite would have had the same result.

For this a writer in the *Atheneum* suggests one reason. He quotes Tennyson's line,

"A people's voice! we are a people yet."

and Kipling's "pungent commentary",

"What should they know of England who only England know?"

Certainly there is that in Kipling's breadth of view which favours rather than discounts his claim to be considered our greatest living poet. But the main thing is the fulness of life in him, and the vital energy of his utterance. When one thinks of Kipling, one finds it difficult to forgive the confessed and absolute lack of "blood" in our new laureate's work.

We read recently an educational speech delivered years ago by a prominent Travancore official, and it suggests one or two remarks. First of all, he accepted, with moderate contentment, the grinding necessity for continuous study on the part of even the youngest schoolboys, and their consequent inability to snatch more than a few moments, if that, for exercise and games. If that is really the case in schools in Travancore, or elsewhere it is an unspeakable shame, and immediate reform in the matter is necessary, at whatever sacrifice. It is no exaggeration to say that a boy's physical fitness means more to the boy, and *far* more to his country, than the mere stocking of his mind; and with physical fitness goes mental *alertness*, which is of much more vital importance than over-accumulated knowledge. Many parents in India do not realise this, and seek to guide, or

force, their sons in ways of quite inhuman studiousness, thus for ever disgusting them with books, and robbing them of the vitality they need for their lives. Teachers, too, oppressed by the thought of an over-exacting curriculum, pile on the work in pure earnestness, but with fatal misjudgment. There is at the present time, a widespread movement in England for the abolition, or at least the minimising, of home-lessons; and we believe that whatever the examination requirements may be, and however much knowledge it is necessary to impart, it is possible for any fitly endowed and equipped teacher, by careful arrangement and pointed revision, and by practising and teaching mental concentration, to leave his pupils free for all but perhaps an hour the time they spend out of school. Of course there are occasions when greater pressure is necessary for a few weeks, but we are speaking of the general course of the year. And it is not physical exercise only that these boys need, but leisure also, without which neither growth nor assimilation is possible.

Later in the speech, it seems to be implied that brusqueness to the point of roughness is a typical English characteristic, as contrasted with the inborn politeness and consideration of an Indian. This is a distinction we have heard made before, and it is a very dubious distinction indeed. But (if we may moralise for a moment) even were the statement true, one might qualify what Mr. Nagam Aiya has said on the subject with the warning that exaggerated "brusqueness" is a much less dangerous thing than the exaggerated form of what he means by "manners." Politeness carried too far is insincerity, and insincerity is a vice—a *moral* matter. If you have anything against a man, or his theories or methods, it is not politeness but hypocrisy to voice sympathy in his presence and criticism behind his back. Far better speak openly to his face; for then explanation and discussion are possible, and a friendship not merely verbal but vital may result. Again, there is a curious reluctance, in this country, to refuse a request. Whether it is possible and desirable to fulfil that request or not, it seems, in some cases, to be considered "bad manners" to decline. No greater mistake could be made; and it is one that is responsible for many a reputation for unreliability. If you do not intend to do a thing, it is not politeness to say that you will, or even to leave the matter doubtful. True courtesy demands that you should give a plain answer to the other man's question, and true courtesy will by the very *manner* of your refusal make that refusal acceptable. It is a great blessing for all parties to know exactly where they stand.

It is to be hoped that readers of the speech did not imagine—what would almost seem to be suggested—that Sam Weller's manner of addressing his father is typical of English ways in this matter! But, indeed, India is worthy of all reverence and imitation in her teaching of implicit deference to parents. Of all her traditions this is the noblest, and we shall have more to say on this subject (a very complicated one, especially at present), in a future issue.

OUR SERIAL STORY.

The Boys of Devapur School.

CHAPTER VI.

By Harry Banbury, B.A., L.C.P.

THE CRICKET MATCH

(*Concluded*).

RAIS Ahmad would not let his team take much refreshment. "If you take too much lemonade or eat too many sweetmeats," said he, "You will feel sleepy and will be of no use when you go out to bat."

"Whom are you going to put in first?" said Qamaruzzaman. "Well," said Rais, "I must put in two steady bats." The Chelgarh bowlers are very good indeed, so we must put two men in to bat who will be likely to stick at their wickets for some time so as to tire the bowlers. I think I shall put in Raja Ram and Jumna Das. They will not score very fast but if they can break down the bowling that is all I want."

As Rais went up to the scorers to tell them the order in which the players were to go in, he came near the headmaster, who had been sitting on the terrace watching the match and applauding the good strokes as heartily as any one. "You have got a hard nut to crack this time, Rais," he said. "One hundred and ninety-eight runs will take some getting."

"Yes, sir," said Rais, "they will. I don't think we shall get them. I shall be quite happy if we give them a hard game, so that we either make a draw of the match, or are beaten by only a small score."

"That's right," said the headmaster. "Who is going to bat first?"

"Raja Ram and Jumna Das," answered Rais. "They are good steady players. Don't you think it is best to put them in first so as to tire the bowlers?" "Yes, it seems to me to be a good plan," replied the headmaster. "If you want any advice as the match goes on," he continued, "I shall be very glad to help you, but I am glad to see you are thinking out the matter for yourself. A good captain will always make his plans before beginning the innings, but he must also remember that it is wise to change his plans, if necessary, to suit any unexpected changes in the course of the game. Remember that in cricket it is the unexpected that often happens." Rais laughed and said, "Well sir, I don't expect to win, so that I hope that the unexpected will happen this time."

The headmaster laughed too. "I hope it will," he said.

Time was up, and the umpires and the fielders went out on the field. A minute or so after, they were followed by the two batsmen. Raja Ram had to face the bowling of Jaliburrahman. The first over passed without any thing happening. Raja Ram played each ball carefully, though it was evident that he was very nervous. Now it was Jumna Das's turn to show what he could do against the bowling of Jan Muhammad. The first two balls he blocked, playing forward

a little. The third ball he could not play at all. He tried to play back, but the ball was too much for him. By chance the ball struck the edge of his bat and shot off to leg betwen his legs and the wickets. A shout from Raja Ram made him run, and to his astonishment he found he had scored a run, or rather the ball had scored it for him, since he had done nothing to get it. Some of the Devapur spectators cheered, but those players who knew the game looked grave for they saw what had happened, and realised that Jumna Das had absolutely no chance against Jan Muhammad's bowling.

Rais called his brother Nasir. "You had better begin to get ready to go in next," he said. "It won't be long before Jumna Das is out."

Raja Ram had now to face the fourth ball of Muhammad Jan's bowling. As usual it came down at a tremendous pace but this time the bowler pitched it a little too much to leg, and Raja Ram seeing this hit out at it with all his might. It was by no means a pretty stroke, but it was very effective, for Raja Ram caught the ball well on the bat and lofted the ball out towards the boundary. As the boundary in this part of the field was further away from the wicket, they were able to run five runs before the ball was thrown into the wicket-keeper's hands.

What a clapping of hands there was this time! The more optimistic of the Devapur supporters began to talk of what Raja Ram could do when he got well set, but their rather noisy glee was soon quietened down, for the very next ball sent Jumna Das's middle stump flying. It was the turn of the Chelgarh supporters to clap now, which they did with a right good will.

"One wicket for six runs looks bad," thought the Devapur boys, but when they saw Nasir going in they were cheered up again, for was not Nasir one of their best bats?

Raja Ram had now to face Jaliburrahman. He continued to play steadily and cautiously throughout the over but did not score. Nasir took his block, and began to play in his usual graceful way. The runs began to come quickly now, sometimes a quick slip for one, sometimes a smart cut for two, and sometimes a grand drive to the boundary.

Ten, twenty, and thirty runs were put up in quick succession on the scoring board. Then with the score at thirty-nine there was a piece of very bad luck. In rather a foolish attempt to steal an extra run from a medium drive off Raja Ram's bat, Nasir was run out.

Nasir was welcomed with clapping from both sides as he walked up to the terrace. He did not look very pleased. "I was just nicely set," he said to his brother. "The bowling is quite easy, if face it properly. It is just my luck to be run out."

Rais laughed and answered "Well, you know you generally are run out. You will try for such risky runs. It does not matter so much in ordinary matches, but I was counting on you to-day to make at least fifty. Twenty-six runs is not bad but you could have made so many more if you had been careful."

"Well, never mind," he continued, as he saw that Nasir was feeling very disgusted with himself. "Better luck next time."

Mazhar Husain was the next man in and runs came slowly until Raja Ram was caught with the score at fifty. Rais, the captain, then went in. Rais was the best bat in the team, so you can imagine the sigh of disgust that went up, when in answer to a sharp "How's that?" from the bowler, Rais was given out leg before wicket.

Rais walked out to the terrace as coolly as if nothing had happened, just smiling a little as usual. "Oh, it's not fair," said one of the boys. Rais heard him and turned round sharply. "What's not fair?," he said. "Don't talk rubbish. The umpire gave me out, and so out I am. You can't play yourself, but you can at least act like a gentleman, and not say things like that."

"That was very bad luck, Rais," called out the headmaster, "and leg before wicket, too." "Yes, sir," answered Rais, "being out, leg before wicket is so unsatisfactory." "It is," said the headmaster laughing. "I believe no batsman ever acknowledges he is out, leg before wicket."

Rais laughed too. "Well, I can't say anything," he said, "for it was our own umpire who gave me out."

"Well what you are going to do next?" asked the headmaster. "I don't quite know what will be the best to do," replied Rais. "I thought of sending in Wali Hyder. He is a good steady bat."

"I don't think you want steady bats in now," said the headmaster. "The Chelgarh bowlers are more confident now, and I think that unless you can break their confidence, they will go on getting our men out for very few runs. Send in Qamaruzzaman."

"But he bats rather wildly," objected Rais. "So he does," agreed the headmaster, "but he has got a good eye, and if he lasts out the first over, he will make a big success. Then, too, he is always jesting with his fellow batsman, calling him out to run, and then getting back quickly to his wicket. All this is very upsetting to the bowlers, and there is no fear of our men being run out, as they all know Qamaruzzaman's ways." Rais's face brightened. "I hadn't thought of that. It is a good idea." So Qamaruzzaman was sent in with instructions to make a big score. Qamaruzzaman was a big lad of nineteen, nearly 6 feet in height, with a pair of big shoulders and a merry laugh all over his face. The very look of him inspired confidence as, rolling up his shirt sleeves, he went out to the wicket.

Qamaruzzaman took his block, looked round at the field, and then nodded to Mazhar Husain at the other wicket, as if to say "Be ready." Down came the first ball at a nice pace but pitched rather short. Qamaruzzaman did not wait for the ball, that was not his way. He took a big stride forward, put all the force he could into a mighty stroke, and lifted the ball right beyond the long boundary for five runs.

Now begin an exciting time for both teams. Mazhar played carefully every ball that came to him, sometimes just putting the ball away for one run, and

whenever he did so, there was, Qamaruzzaman half away down the wicket calling on him loudly to run. Even when no run could be got, Qamaruzzaman rushed out from his wicket as if to run, taking care however to be within easy reach of his ground so that he could get back in time.

The Chelgarh fielders got a little flustered, threw the ball wildly at the wicket when they thought that they had a chance of stumping Qamaruzzaman, and when they missed several times and more runs were scored through overthrows, the fielding became even more demoralised. At length one of the fielders missed a beautiful catch from Qamaruzzaman, and this seemed to sober the team a little.

"Pull yourselves together you fellows," said the Chelgarh captain as the fielders changed at the end of the over, "you are giving them the game. Their score is already ninety-eight and we should have had them all out by now. Take no notice of that big fellow's antics. He is no player. He can hit out and that is all. We shall have him directly."

When the score had reached one-hundred and twenty, Mazhar failed to respond quickly enough to Qamaruzzaman's call and he was run out. He was followed by Wali Hyder who played a steady game for eight runs and was then clean bowled. Qamaruzzaman was not scoring so quickly. His display of energy had tired him and so he was playing more carefully, with the result that he was playing badly, for Qamaruzzaman could not play well when he tried to play carefully.

Rais had noticed this and as the next player, Ram Das, went in, he said, "Tell Qamaruzzaman, that he must not try to play carefully: he will be out if he does. Tell him that I say he must make a few more runs before he is out."

Ram Das did so, and Qamaruzzaman began to play again as he did in the beginning. His tactics were not quite so successful now. The Chelgarh fielders were more composed and fielded steadily, so that it was dangerous to try and steal runs as had been done before. Still Qamaruzzaman kept on scoring steadily, driving the ball time after time to the boundary.

The Chelgarh captain had already changed the bowling twice. He now put on Abdul Aziz who was very clever at bowling tempting balls. At the same time he placed his field so as to suit the bowler, hoping that it would not be long before Qamaruzzaman put a ball right into a fielder's hands. Three or four overs went by, only marked by several big drives from Qamaruzzaman, and a few single hits from Ram Das. Then came a ball which pitched a little shorter than usual. Qamaruzzaman misjudged the pitch and instead of lifting the ball, as he generally did, to the boundary he caught it awkwardly on the bat and skied it high up in the air just over the bowler's head. Down came the ball into the bowler's hands. He held it tight, and Qamaruzzaman walked out laughing merrily in answer to some jesting remarks of the Chelgarh captain.

As he came to the terrace he was welcomed with quite an ovation, for his score was the highest yet in the match,

being sixty-runs. The total score had now reached one hundred and seventy.

"Only twenty-nine runs more to get and four more wickets to fall," said Rais to his friends. "If only the remaining players will play steadily, we may win the match."

The question of who was to win, however, was not to be decided that day. The light had been getting rather bad for the last few minutes, and the umpires had been noticed to consult their watches every now and then. It was now half-past five, the time agreed upon by both captains at which to draw stumps, and the umpires gave the signal that time was up.

Of course both teams and their supporters were quite sure that they would have won if the match could have been played out. Ram Das, especially, was talking loudly about what he and the remaining players could have done if they had had the chance. "I was well set," said he, "and had just begun to score steadily : I could have easily made half the runs myself. Then Shiva Narain can hit well, and he would have got at least five or six runs before he got out. Then Hafiz and Ajit Singh are not bad players and they could have easily made five or six each, and that would have been more than enough to win."

Just then Rais walked by with the headmaster who was going to his bungalow. "Well, what do you think, Rais?" said the headmaster. "Our little friend Ram Das seems to be quite sure." Rais laughed, "I think we have been very lucky to make such a favourable draw," said he. "It is true I had bad luck and ought to have made a decent score, and Nasir ought to have made double what he did, but the Chelgarh team is very much better than ours, and if they had had a day's rest after their railway journey I think they would have given us a tremendous beating. As it was, I think the time saved us, for I doubt very much whether the last four could have made twenty-nine runs between them. Ram Das' average score is about three, and the others are no better."

Just then the Chelgarh captain came up to thank the headmaster for his hospitality and to wish him good-bye. "Good-bye" said the headmaster, "I am pleased that you have had a good time, and both Rais and I are grateful to you for not giving us the beating we deserved."

The two boys laughed. "But your boys played a good game, sir, and they had a chance to win," protested the Chelgarh captain.

"That 's true," replied the headmaster, but on the whole we had a great deal of good luck. There is no doubt that your team is a very fine one, their play is much superior in quality to that of our boys. Well, good-bye, again, we shall be pleased to see you another year." "Good-bye, sir," responded the captain, "we hope that you will come over some time and see us at Chelgarh."

"Ah! then I suppose you will give our boys a tremendous beating." The spectators by this time had begun to leave the field, and the Chelgarh team went to the hostel to gather up their

bags and then to hurry to the station to catch their train, which left Devapur for Chelgarh at seven o' clock.

Rais wished the headmaster good-night at the gate of his bungalow garden, and then ran after the team. The Chelgarh captain was his cousin, and they had much to talk about.

SILENCE IN POETRY·

BY THE EDITOR.

(This paper is an old one: it is abbreviated from one was written by the editor when he was at college. The earnest rhetoric of it amuses one a little. But, though it is "full of sound and fury," he does not think it "signifies nothing." It has been given as a lecture to several audiences in Madras, and it is now printed by the request of people in those audiences, and in the hope that it may help to suggest to readers a profitable way of looking upon poetry.)

Speech is silvern: silence is golden. Speech is modern: silence is primeval. Silence is first and last: speech is a passing thing. Speech may be foolish, halting, ignoble, commonplace; but silence was and is original and masterly. In a room, a street, a city, speech assumes a passing, uncertain dominion; but all the wider kingdoms—continents, worlds, universes—are the demesne of silence. And this ancient and everlasting sovereign is not master merely of starry wastes and formless deserts where the voice of man is never heard. Always and everywhere there may come a sudden startling, when the finger of silence writes visibly upon the wall,—when the speakers realise that there is a greater majesty fronted by their speech, and in a sense defied by it; and that it is a presumptuous and hazardous thing thus to challenge silence. We speak on sufferance in the world.

We notice that whenever we touch reality we get near to silence. For instance, how clamorously insistent is veracity, and how calm and quiet is truth! Opinion is noisy and discordant: knowledge is at rest and still. Doctrine was ever a blusterer: faith has few words to speak. Display and ambition are rioters: power is both terrible and calm. Acquaintanceship, rivalry, affectation, chatter and jangle; but quiet and strong are comradeship and love. And so everywhere we observe the stillness of deep waters and the peacefulness of all that abides.

One remembers what a Greek would say in presence of the high gods. "Euphemeite: hush; be ye still!" And that world "euphemeite," which they used for "be silent" meant originally "speak well." They saw that before the gods silence is best speech for mortals. So in all great religions, as in the Jewish: "Be still, and know that I am God!"

Now, the poet above all men has to do with reality. His business is with the vital, the *original*, the permanent. Therefore he will have much dealing with silence. He dares in face of sovereign silence to lift up his voice; but if he knows his art and the truth that makes it there will be awe and reverence

in his uplifting. If there be any impertinence, or ribaldry, or bombast in that voice, it will die away like the sound of brass or tinkling cymbals. The great voice is absolutely loyal to silence, and gives perpetual proof of that loyalty. Behind, within, all the greatest poetry is a silence that can be felt. Now, your Augustan, your half-poet, has no dealings with silence : there is no quietness in his world, no still back ground for his rhythmic movement. As we read Pope, we are conscious of a steady unvarying accompaniment, which does not seem to cease even when his verses cease. It drums and reverberates, and not for a long time is the air restored to stillness. Whereas your romantic, your poet free-born, breaks silence so reverently, so worshipfully, that still it seems unbroken, and primal stillness, and wonder, and loveliness, are yet around us. And when the voice of this *singer* ceases, then is all the music mute ; only

> Music, when soft voices die,
> Vibrates in the *memory*.

If the poet be given to self-analysis, he will tell us of this allegiance of his to silence. Wordsworth will distinctly say that his " daily teacher" is "the *silence* that is in the starry sky." The thoughts that " uphold and cherish" are quiet and solitary thoughts, and

> have power to make
> Our noisy years seem moments in the being
> Of the eternal *silence*.

And withal the presence of this teacher, this eternal being, is too mighty to be a calming influence merely. Even when there is joy in it, it *disturbs* with joy ; and if it be fraught with sadness it *oppresses*. It oppresses Wordsworth as he looks on Yarrow, and straightway his poetic candour forces him to magical expression :—

> O, that some minstrel's harp were near,
> To utter notes of gladness,
> And chase this *silence* from the air,
> That fills my heart with sadness.

Perhaps the sublimest instance of the living presence of majestic silence behind Wordsworth's speech is in the last verse of the Lucy poems. Gradually and terribly, as we read the stanza, the elemental silence comes upon us ; till at length, in the last line, the poet hardly seems to be speaking at all : we hear only the dull remorseless beating of the pulses of that earthy, stony world.

> She has no motion now, no force,
> She neither hears nor sees—
> Rolled round, in earth's diurnal course;
> With rocks, and stones, and trees.

We have begun with Wordsworth, because he was so pre-eminently conscious of the matter. Many pages might be filled with illustrations from him. But we may go on to choose at random among those less self-conscious loyalists who are rather the doers than the professors of the words of silence. As a Shakespearian example, we may take the sixty-fourth sonnet. Though the subject is one for brooding, the greater part of the sonnet moves freely and evenly, with great wealth and power of speech, but with small hint of that pensive quiet that borders silence ; till, in the last quatrain, there comes a check, the speed slackens, the hard clear light be-

comes softer and lovelier. Silence begins to brood upon the face of the passionate deep, and at last when two lines remain there is a pause still and deathlike, broken at length by the soft and unexpressive murmur of the close.

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss, and loss with store;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
And state itself confounded to decay,
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate,—
That Time will come and take my love away :—
This thought is like a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

Hamlet, again, is responsive to every mighty influence, and there is a hint by no means irrelevant in his contemptuous ejaculation "Words, words, words !" And when, at the moment of his doom, he cries "The rest is silence," he is simply responding once again to a presence that has haunted him all the time.

But the purely delighted poet, the luxurious poet, the poet's poet, will approach the silence in another way. It is interesting to see how Keats does it. To begin with, he is startled to hear

A little noiseless noise among the leaves,
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves.

To him the "unheard melodies," the songs of silence, as it were, are sweeter than the heard. . And the death-terror, the dread lest he should die too soon, the thought of those "high-piled books" yet to be written, of that "ungarnered grain," of those "huge cloudy symbols" with "shadows yet untraced,"—these thoughts, and the restless longing and ambition of them, do not drive him to human company and consolation, but to the lonely places where silence subdues and heals :—

Then on the shore
Of the wide world I stand alone and think
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink.

He calls to those who are sick of the clamour of voices.—

O ye! whose ears are dinned with uproar rude,
Or fed too much with cloying melody,
Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and brood!
Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quired,

And the silence does not lose its charm for him even when it becomes one with death : what happier deliverance for a mortal than to be "lapped round," in Matthew Arnold's phrase, with peace ? Blessed would it be to dream away into the silence :—

Many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain.

But it is in that marvellous ballad of his, "La belle dame sans mercy," that we are most *startled* by the silence. Here the mood is no longer one of pure de-

light, but of chilly wander and dismay. We are in fairyland, but fairyland without sunlight, without music, without cheer. Selodm has verse so frozen and horrified the soul :—

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
  Alone and palely loitering ?
The sedge has withered from the lake,
  And no birds sing.

Pale, wintry oppression of silence, unbroken by the voice of birds. It reminds one of those lines where Coleridge, as some think, reaches his highest level of achievement—the lines in *Christabel* that express nature's silent horror in presence of the unholy deeds of Geraldine. One brief hour of her devilish working, one hour of nature's astounded silence, an hour marked only by the silently journeying stars :—

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine ! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine ! one hour was thine—
Thou'st had thy will ! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.

May we, having given these few very well-known examples of what we mean, ask our readers to look out for such things in poetry ? Nor will anyone ever apprehend fully what a great poet has to say to him unless he has the power and the will to make a perfect silence within his own spirit, that without interruption, or confusion, or banal echoing, the great voice may duly be heard.

→←

BOOKLOVERS' POEMS

Our best friends.

While you converse with lords and dukes,
I have their betters here—my books ;
Fixed in an elbow chair at ease
I choose companions as I please.
I'd rather have one single shelf
Than all my friends, except yourself ;
For after all that can be said
Our best acquaintance are the dead.

SHERIDAN.

"For wisdom, piety, delight and use."

Nor to philosophers is praise denied,
Whose wise instructions after-ages guide ;
Yet vainly most their age in study spend ;
No end of writing books, and to no end :
Beating their brains for strange and hidden things,
Whose knowledge no delight nor profit brings :
Themselves with doubt both day and night perplex,
No gentle reader please, or teach, but vex.
Books should to one of these four ends conduce
For wisdom, piety, delight, or use.
What need we gaze upon the spangled sky
Or into matter's hidden causes pry ?...
If we were wise these things we should not mind
But more delight in easy matters find...
Learn to live well that thou may'st die so too,
To live and die is all we have to do.

DENHAM'S *Translation of Mancini*.

Dearest of all.

Were I to name, out of the times gone by,
The poets dearest to me, I should say,
Pulci for spirits and a fine free way;
Chaucer for manners, and close, silent eye;
Milton for classic taste, and harp strung high;
Spenser for luxury, and sweet, sylvan play;
Horace for chatting with, from day to day;
Shakespeare for all, but most, society.
But which take with me, could I take but one?
Shakespeare,—as long as I was unoppressed
With the world's weight, making sad thoughts intenser;
But did I wish, out of the common sun
To lay a wounded heart in leafy rest,
And dream of things far off and healing,
—Spenser.

LEIGH HUNT.

The dead alone appreciated.

That critic must indeed be bold
Who pits new authors against old.
Only the ancient coin is prized,
The dead alone are canonized:
What was even Shakespeare until then?
A poet scarce compared with Ben:
And Milton in the streets no taller
Than sparkling easy-ambling Waller.
Waller now walks with rhyming crowds,
While Milton sits above the clouds,
Above the stars, his fixed abode,
And points to men their way to God.

W. SAVAGE LANDOR.

To Wordsworth.

We both have run o'er half the space
Listed for mortal's earthly race;
We both have crossed life's fervid line,
And other stars before us shine:
May they be bright and prosperous
As those that have been stars for us!
Our course by Milton's light was sped,
And Shakespeare shining overhead:
Chatting on deck was Dryden too,
The Bacon of the rhyming crew;
None ever crossed our mystic sea
More richly stored with thought than he;
Though never tender nor sublime,
He wrestles with, and conquers, Time.
To learn my lore on Chaucer's knee,
I left much prouder company;
Thee gentle Spenser fondly led,
But me he mostly sent to bed.

W. SAVAGE LANDOR.

"Deep-versed in books and shallow in himself."

Many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment, equal or superior,
(And what he brings, what need he elsewhere seek?)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep-versed in books, and shallow in himself;
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.

MILTON.

O for a booke.

O for a booke and a shadie nooke,
Eyther in-a-doore or out,
With the greene leaves whispering overhede,
Or the street cryes all about;
Where I may reade all at my ease,
Both of the newe and olde,
For a jollie goode booke whereon to looke
Is better to me than golde.

J. WILSON.

The comradeship of books.

My days among the dead are passed;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old;
My never-failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe;
And while I understand and feel,
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedewed
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the dead; with them
I live in long-past years,
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with an humble mind.

My hopes are with the dead; anon
My place with them will be.
And I with them will travel on
Through all futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust,
That will not perish in the dust.

SOUTHEY.

Shakespeare.

Soul of the age!
The applause, delight, the wonder of our stage,
My Shakespeare, rise! I will not lodge thee by
Chaucer, or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
A little further, to make thee a room:
Thou art a monument without a tomb,
And art alive still, while thy book doth live,
And we have wits to read, and praise to give...

And though thou had'st small Latin and less Greek,
From thence, to honour thee, I will not seek
For names, but call forth thundering Æschylus,
Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,
To life again, to hear thy buskin tread
And shake a stage; or when thy sock was on,
Leave thee alone, for the comparison
Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
Sent forth; or since did from their ashes come.

Triumph, my Britain! Thou hast one to show
To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe.
He was not of an age, but for all time!
And all the Muses still were in their prime,
When, like Apollo, he came forth to warm
Our ears, or, like a Mercury, to charm.

Nature herself was proud of his designs,
And loved to wear the dressing of his lines,
Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.

BEN JONSON.

The world of books.

Dreams, books, are each a world; and books, we know,
Are a substantial world, both pure and good:
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
Matter wherein right voluble I am,
To which I listen with a ready ear;
Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear,—
The gentle lady married to the Moor;
And heavenly Una with her milk-white lamb...
Blessings be with them—and eternal praise,
Who gave us nobler loves, and nobler cares—
The poets, who on earth have made us heirs
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays!
Oh! might my name be numbered among theirs,
Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

WORDSWORTH.

Better than books.

(*a*) Whan that I here the smale foules singe,
And that the floures ginne for to springe,
Farwel my studie, as lasting that sesoun!

CHAUCER.

(*b*) Up! up! my friend, and quit your books;
Or surely you'll grow double:
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings;
Our meddling intellect
Mis-shapes the beauteous forms of things:—
We murder to dissect.

Enough of science and of art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

WORDSWORTH.

DIALOGUE.

From the "Tempest" of Dryden and Davenant.

(The play is the most celebrated of the many adaptations that have been made of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. It has, of course, lost every thing that is Shakespearian in the play; but it is amusing enough, and was a great success upon the stage. Pepys, who was so fond of it that he went to see it six times, tells us in his diary that it is "very pleasant, and full of such good variety that I cannot be more pleased almost in a comedy." To Davenant occurred the idea, which was warmly approved by Dryden, that it would be well to introduce a male character who had never seen a women, to counter Miranda, who has never seen a man. This is what Dryden, comically enough, calls "adding to the design of Shakespeare." They added new sailor-parts too, and this also seems to have been Davenant's idea. Perhaps the funniest "improvement" of all is the giving to Caliban a sister like himself, and the courting of her by Trincalo. We choose a scene where the authors are giving their farcical variant of the claim of Shakespeare's Stephano to be lord of the island.)

Characters :—*Stephano*, master of the ship.
Mustacho, his mate.
Trincalo, boatswain.
Ventoso, a mariner.

Stephano, Mustacho, Ventoso.

Vent. This isle's our own, that's our comfort, for the Duke, the Prince, and all their train, are perished.

Must. Our ship is sunk, and we can never get home again: we must e'en turn savages, and the next that catches his fellow may eat him.

Vent. No, no, let us have a government; for if we live well and orderly, Heaven will drive shipwrecks ashore to make us all rich; therefore let us carry good consciences, and not eat one another.

Steph. Whoever eats any of my subjects, I'll break out his teeth with my sceptre; for I was master at sea, and will be Duke on land. You, Mustacho, have been my mate, and shall be my Viceroy.

Vent. When you are Duke, you may choose your Viceroy; but I am a free subject in a new plantation, and will have no Duke but with *my* voice...

Steph. (Whispering). Ventoso, dost thou hear, I will advance thee: prithee, give me thy voice.

Vent. I'll have no whispering to corrupt the election; and to show that I have no private ends, I declare aloud that I will be Viceroy, or I'll keep my voice for myself.

Must. Stephano, hear me: I will speak for the people, because there are few, or rather none, in the isle to speak for themselves. Know then, that to prevent the further shedding of Christian blood, we are all content Ventoso should be Viceroy, upon condition I may be Viceroy over him. Speak, good people, are you well agreed? What, no man answer? Well, you may take their silence for consent.

Vent. *You* speak for the people, Mustacho? *I'll* speak for them, and declare generally with one voice, one and all, that there shall be no Viceroy but the Duke, unless I be he.

Must. *You* declare for the people, who never saw your face! Cold iron shall decide it?

(*They draw their swords.*)

Steph. Hold, loving subjects: we will have no civil war during our reign. I do hereby appoint you both to be my Viceroys over the whole island.

Both. Agreed! agreed!

Enter *Trincalo,* with a great bottle.

Steph. We have got another subject now; welcome, welcome into our dominions!

Trinc. What subject, or what dominions? Here's old sack, boy. The king of good fellows can be no subject. I will be old Simon the King.

Must. Ha, old boy, how didst thou escape?

Trinc. Upon a butt of sack, boys, which the sailors threw overboard. But you are alive, ho? for I will tipple with no ghosts till I am dead. Thy hand, Mustacho, and thine, Ventoso; the storm has done its worst. Stephano alive too! give thy bosom thy hand, master.

Vent. You must kiss it, then; for, I must tell you, we have chosen him Duke in a full assembly.

Trinc. A Duke? where? what's he Duke of?

Must. Of this island, man. Oh, Trincalo, we are all made: the island's empty. All's our own, boy and we will speak to his Grace for thee that thou may'st be as great as we are.

Trinc. You great? What the Devil are you?

Vent. We too are Viceroys over all the island; and when we are weary of governing, thou shalt succeed us.

Trinc. Do you hear, Ventoso, I will succeed you both in your places before you enter into them.

Steph. Trincalo, sleep and be sober; and make no more uproars in my country.

Trinc. Why, what are you, sir, what are you?

Steph. What I am, I am by free election, and you, Trincalo, are not yourself; but we pardon your first fault, because it is the first day of our reign.

Trinc. Humph! were matters carried so swimmingly against me whilst I was swimming, and saving myself for the good of the people of this island?

Must. Art thou mad, Trincalo? Wilt thou disturb a settled government, where thou art a mere stranger to the laws of the country?

Trinc. I'll have no laws.

Vent. Then civil war begins. (*Vent.* and *Must.* draw their swords)

Steph. Hold, hold, I'll have no bloodshed: my subjects are but few; let him make a rebellion by himself, and a rebel I, Duke Stephano, declare him. Viceroys, come away.

Trinc. And Duke Trincalo declares that he will make open war wherever he meets thee, or thy Viceroys! (They leave him).

UP TO NUWARA ELIYA.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Reprinted from the *Madras Mail.*)

IT is always impolite to listen to other folk's conversation, and generally painful. If they are talking about you, your discomfiture is proverbial; and, on the other hand, if it is only a random general remark you hear how weary is the weight of the casual word of a stranger! Here are question and answer overheard by me to-day, impolitely and painfully :—Man :—"Hum ! haw ! and when you travelled up here to Nuwara Eliya, didn't it bo-o-ore you dreadfully ?" Woman :—(apologetically, and with an immediate after-rush to a new subject) :—"No : it was too pretty." O everlastingly characteristic banal question. O soul-paralysing answer ! To have clung along those hill sides, and measured those heights and valleys, and then say "pretty !" Yes, and I am sure a Bay of Bengal sunset is "pretty" too, is it not ? And the High Street of Oxford is "pretty" and Edinburgh is *such* a "pretty" place, and Paderewski's playing is wonderfully "delicate," though not so "delicate" as Pachmann's, and—dear me—how wonderfully "pretty" is the C Minor Symphony ! Alas, will not a great trump sound some day, when we shall be judged by our adjectives ?

It is hard to understand why so many of Nuwara Eliya's wonted visitors prefer to go up and come down by night. They have made the journey often : it becomes too monotonous : "We know every turning, every little station : we know every tea-bush on the line." Well, nothing could give charm to the bleak evenness of a tea plantation, but I should have thought that the better the knowledge of the little stations and the greater the familiarity with those numberless corners and their swiftly changing views, the greater one's delight in these things. Of course, it is wonderful the first time. The luxuriance of the richly-watered land you traverse before you climb ; then the grim effort of the climbing (none the less exhilarating because the machinery does it—your mind is bent on the struggle up) ; the succession of steep and lofty hills crowded sometimes with verdure to the top, and sometimes grander in splendid and forbidding bareness : the glimpses of the white main road, with its pioneering dignity (for in a remote region you can never lose your sense of a deep intimate rivalry between single road and single line) ; the sudden sound and apparition of unsuspected waterfalls in clefts deeply hidden ; the welcome breath of the keen, sweet air that for months you have sighed for—if such things as these belong to the journey, can it ever pall upon you ? And when you reach the highest levels, and some hill tops are clothed, not with snow, but with mist like snow, and others are hidden in dark driving clouds, laden with refreshment, and the palm trees have given place to the firs and gorse of Home—is it boring ?

At Nanuoya, near the journey's end, comes the change from a real train to a toy one. Four or five neat, tiny carriages are to be dragged round and round the hills, at immense gradients, for the last few miles. It is terrible work for the most amusingly human little engine

you can find anywhere. First it lets off terrifically prophetic scream, and straightway pulls its load out of the station and across the village street. Then, in our case, it stopped, apparently to rest from its labours, and reconsider the task before it. At last, with another shriek, and puffing and panting and snorting incredible, it began tugging, and up we went like this—snort, tug, stop; snort, tug, stop; and at length snort, tug-g-g. And when the gradient slackened, it was a most joyous thing to look out of the window and see the eager little creature racing along in freedom like a terrier. Its eight miles an hour had all the appearance of desperate and guilty speed. There is a fine feeling of gradual isolation in that last ascent; and when a new deep valley, clothed in trees and sprinkled with quiet bungalows, appears over the brow of the last hill, one knows the charm of a remote Paradise. The twistings and turnings are over, but let not the boldest spirit venture to lift his finger, and point and say:—"In that direction,—no, in that, lieth Colombo."

POEMS OF THE INDIAN RENAISSANCE.

(From "The Glasgow Herald.")

TWO recent books, "The Bird of Time" and the "Gitanjali," by Indian writers, afford striking proof of the validity of modern educational theory. The highest civilisation is that which aims not at uniformity of type but at the blending of diverse elements in harmony, and the policy of our modern educators and statesmen, especially in relation to the Indian Empire, is the grafting of the universal elements of modern culture on to what is best in the old. A certain school of Little Englanders still hold that Western education in the East must necessarily mean the production of a denationalised type and deprecate its influence. It would be hard to trace any lack of spontaneity in the writings of Sarojina Naidu and Rabindranath Tagore. Both writers have been in close contact with Western influences—Mrs. Naidu studied in this country during the most plastic years of her life—both express themselves in almost faultless English without that straining after pompous phraseology which so often marks the Indian writer in our language. Yet, as one Indian reviewer writes, both are "representative of that union on which depends the hope of a nobler Indian nationhood."

Western Culture and Eastern Idealism.

In line with their national tradition and culture they have presented their thought on the great facts of life with Indian mysticism and reserve. The new and fresh element is that their thoughts are not worked out in relation to imaginary semi-divine figures which move half-veiled in a field of epic romance but in the simple natural incidents of Indian daily life. There is a naïvety and charm which awaken echoes of the neo-Celtic school, and it is not without signification that Arthur Symons and Edmund Gosse have stood as sponsors to Mrs. Naidu's poems, and W. B. Yeats to the edition

of Rabindranath Tagore's "Gitanjali" in this country. It is of interest again to note that the two poets come from widely separated parts of India and illustrate the spontaneity and widespread nature of the new movement.

Sarojini Naidu

is already known to a certain extent by "The Golden Threshold," published in 1905. Three biographical facts have had a notable influence on her poems: her courage and intrepidity in facing for the sake of love a marriage beyond the pale of caste, her extreme delicacy of health, which at times brings an element of pathos into her more exuberant verse; and the advice given to her at the age of 16 by Edmund Gosse to reject her facile English strain and be a "genuine Indian poet of the Deccan." There is no more striking note in the two subsequent volumes than this definite and deliberate Orientalism. Both in the choice of subjects and in the use of metaphor and simile Mrs. Naidu is true to her environment. The "Rajput's Love Song" is sung with its echoes of age-long chivalry, the "Palanquin Bearers" pass with the rhythm of their silent feet, and the white river flashes and scintillates, "curved like a tusk from the mouth of the city gates." The morning of toil, the noon of fainting thirst and rest, the evening of the realisation of life are portrayed by the threefold "Street Cries" in the bazaar, and love's longing by the strident call of an Indian bird, to which popular tradition has fixed the words "Pi-kahan" (Where is my love?). The Indian tradition of womanhood is used and beautified by the sense of passion from within, by a high idealism which transcends the pathos of its pain. The note of "The Suttee" is not the cruelty of the system but the impossibility of a separate physical life when the spiritual life has been broken in twain: "Shall the flesh survive when the soul is gone?" Through the seeming strictness of the pardah come the great realities of life, its sorrows and its opportunities, from which no human soul can screen another. ("The Pardah Nashin").

Her Attitude to Life

is a strange blending of the old and the new in Indian thought, which can only be understood by classifying her amongst the mystics, who are akin all the world over. The Divine is essentially her master. In the "Songs of Life" there is a strong sense of purpose, of courage, of readiness to face the strenuous lessons of defeat. A true patriotism born of the new age, in which India hopes to reap "the radiant promise of renascent morn," inspires several poems.

"Yea, you may quell my blood with sudden anguish,
Fetter my limbs with some compelling pain. . . .
How will you daunt my free, far-journeying fancy
That rides upon the pinions of the rain?
How will you tether my triumphant mind,
Rival and fearless comrade of the wind?"
(A Challenge to Fate.)

But those who look for the larger hope and faith which Western poetry has drawn from its religious environment forget that these poems are not the expression of a logical creed but the passionate utterances of an Indian

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woman in the tense atmosphere of conflicting faiths and transitional thought. There is a depth of sorrow in "The Spring Songs" which even their exquisite radiance cannot hide, and elsewhere a titanic resolution to conquer the "sorrow of life with the sorrow of song." At times the haunting mystery of nature is solved by the sense of beauty and the Divine pantheistically conceived, in other poems there is the deep desire for the living God.

"With futile hands we seek to gain
Our inaccessible desire,
Diviner summits to attain
With faith that sinks and feet that tire;
But nought shall conquer or control
The heavenward hunger of our soul."
(From "The Golden Threshold.")

Rabindranath Tagore.

The original poems of the "Gitanjali" (song offerings) are in Bengali, and are sung to-day on the roadsides and roof-tops of Bengal to wavering Indian tunes, but the author, Rabindranath Tagore, is of sufficient English education to himself produce the recently issued English version. Its thought therefore, does not come to us through the medium of translation, but is the direct expression of an Eastern mind in contact with Western influences and yet retaining to the full Eastern characteristics. The form is a species of metrical prose. The choice of words is deliberate, delicate, and true to their classical use, and reflects a keen sense of colour and of tune. To the Indian reader the marvel of his poetry is its touch on the old familiar things, and the setting of them in the light of a new aspiration, a new desire. The "right of entrance to the great fair of common human life" is asked and a new patriotism with emphasis on the value of each individual life.

"Where the mind is without fear and the head held high; where knowledge is free; where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls; where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of habit- Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake."

"He is the first among our saints who has not refused to live, but has spoken out of Life itself, and that is why we give him our love," writes an Indian friend (Intr. to "Gitanjali"), and yet at the same time it is no feverish reform, but the triumph of the spiritual over the material. There is throughout the acknowledgment of human personality in relation to the Divine Spirit pervading and embracing all. The sky is overspread with "the great pageant of thee and me." The somewhat fulsome praise, which some English reviewers have showered upon the volume, comparing its probable effect on Western thought to that of the influence of the Bible, has possibly hindered the real appreciation of its many intrinsic merits. Original in the sense of absolutely fresh thought, it certainly is not: the influence of Christian ideals is apparent and it is possible to parallel many lines from the Psalms or from Tennyson. But original in the sense of spontaneous grasp of universal truth and the presentation thereof in Eastern terms, it certainly is. To W. B. Yeats the volume "fathoms all," it touches the great mysteries of life with a sense of reverence and of quiet happiness, remote from the dust of human passion and desire.

M. G. C.